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THE
VALE OF FELICITY,

OR,

SYLVAN HAPPINESS.

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THE
VALE OF FELICITY,

OR,

SYLVAN HAPPINESS:

FOURTRAYED IN

A SERIES OF LETTERS,
MORAL AND ENTERTAINING.

BY A LADY.

Calm are the Pleasures of a rural Life,
At Distance far from Folly, Noise, and Strife.
RETIRED PLEASURES.

IN TWO VOLUMES.

VOL. II.

L O N D O N,
PRINTED FOR A. HAMILTON,
No. 5, Ruffel-Court, Covent-Garden,

1791.

VALE OF THE CITY

ST. JOHN'S HOSPITAL

A REPORT OF THE

MANAGEMENT AND FINANCIAL STATEMENT



THE
VALE OF FELICITY.

LETTER XXXVII.

DUKE OF ———,
TO
SIR HARRY EVELYN.

I HAVE exactly followed the advice of my dear friend, and find my favoured fair one in every respect equal to my wishes; nothing but the formality of law now keeps us from the blissful state I so ardently long for. Make haste, my friend, come and teach

VOL. II.

B

me

THE VALE

me how to make a jovial, rational, and happy throng. All my friends, who, by their example have taught me what true happiness is, must share my felicity. As soon as you come, all things will be settled, and your friend soon be made the happiest of mortals.

Let the dull sluggard, Time, then shake his glass,
And make the slow-pac'd moments quicker pass.

Your's sincerely.

LETTER



LETTER XXXVIII.

MR. WARTON

TO

MR. MITFORD.

THANKS to you, my ever dear friend, for your agreeable epistle, which proved doubly welcome, my Selina having borne a part in it. I commiserated the first part where you told me of the loss of your valuable parents; but what words can paint, or pen describe those paragons of human nature. I revere both my Lord and

B 2

Lady

Lady as if they were my own parents. Sure never mortals acted so nobly, so benevolently, not only to you or your's, but to the world at large. How worthy of imitation.—Oh ! did but the wealthy know the heart-felt satisfaction of such god-like virtue, how would their hearts recoil to see their fortunes squandered, their constitutions ruined, their families dishonoured, and not one bare memento left to transmit their names with honour to posterity ; and whose vices only live in remembrance, when their bodies are mouldering into dust.

Those worthy people will be immortalized, and their virtues live in memory till time shall be no more. What favourites of Heaven must you my friends

friends have been, to become so happily possessed of perfection, bliss without alloy. Pardon what you may, perhaps, call envious; but, be assured, my soul beats high with benevolent emulation, and I long for nothing so much as finding proper objects to bestow my bounty upon. Heaven be praised, my amiable wife will not only be a helper, but a teacher in this arduous, this delightful business. I have also an able assistant in my brother Dean, and as promising a deputy in Mr. Williams, my young Chaplain, who seems to entertain the most refined notions of duty to our fellow mortals: His history may not be unentertaining to you.

I met with him at early prayers one morning, during our visit to the metropolis, and after service made my obedience to him; which he returned in a manner that greatly prejudiced me in his favour. His devotion seemed unaffected, which is not often seen in our Churches; but when he was divested of his robes, his dress for a Clergyman was mean in the extreme; this more particularly excited my curiosity. I asked him how long he had been engaged at that Church; for, as I was but lately from the country, I was unacquainted with the circumstance. He answered, with a tear glistening in his eyes, that he only officiated occasionally for the Curate, at a stipulated price, which for
the

the credit of the sacred function, I will not mention; I saw his distress too evident not to feel a wish to relieve him; I therefore entreated his company the following day to dinner, giving him my address, with my purse, which was but ill supplied, requesting his name at the same time, which he gave me; and bowed with a silent modesty, which much affected me. You may remember I introduced him at dinner, on the day appointed; and I endeavoured to behave to him as a familiar acquaintance, in order to relieve him of his embarrassment as much as possible. After dinner, as you must recollect, we separated into parties, and Williams and I took a turn in Hyde-Park; when, after some common discourse, I begged to

know his circumstances; he assured me as far as poverty could reduce him; he said he was unworthy to keep the company of a gentleman; but if an honest and untainted heart could recommend him, he was not unworthy the honour I did him. I asked him if he would accept a Chaplainship? He replied, he was willing to take any thing which was not derogatory to the sacred function he professed; but he once had been instituted Chaplain to a Nobleman, who wished to make him sacrifice his peace and character to the worst of purposes, that of being a procurator in ordinary to his Lordship, which, he thanked Heaven he was proof against, though golden baits were not wanting with promises of preferment. These however, he rejected.

rejected with horror, which was the principal occasion of his present poverty; I commended this resolution in him, and told him I wanted a person of his character and principles to be with me, and whom I could look upon as a friend and brother. He thanked me in the warmest terms of gratitude, and assured me, that nothing on his part should be wanting to further my best wishes in whatever was proper or lawful for him to engage in. I then begged to know his family and place of nativity, of which he gave me the following account:.

My father and mother I know not, neither the place of my birth: I was taken up from the wreck of a vessel by

the Captain and crew of a merchant-ship in the India Company's service, at the age of about one year, as near as they could surmise: This Sir, is all I know of my family or birth; but Captain Williams, which was the name of my preserver, behaved with uncommon humanity; he nursed and fed me himself, and I slept in his bosom; we were two months as he has often informed me, before we reached the Indies; as soon as he got to shore, he provided me a nurse, had me baptized after his name, which was John Williams, and so great was his affection for me, that he could not leave me behind, though much importuned by his friends to that purpose.

My

My nurse and I embarked with him for England, after a stay of about three months. My adopted father took the utmost care of me, and we reached England in safety, after a prosperous voyage of three months more, and he carried me home to his wife with him ; but, unfortunately for him, it broke the harmony of their future life ; the Lady positively said I was his son ; she could trace all his features in my face, and doubtless, my mother had been the voyage with him, which his pretended fondness would not let her take. In vain did he protest, in vain did the ship's crew swear, she was so implacable, that unless he took from me his protection, she would never forgive him ; this was too severe a trial of his humanity , and though he

loved his wife with the most ardent affection, he rather chose to forego the sweets of domestic happiness, than desert the orphan whom Providence had so peculiarly given him from the womb of the ocean. She, indeed, promised to take the care of me upon herself, with a proviso, that she should never see me more; to which he peremptorily declaring he never would consent, a mutual separation took place, and I was taken with him a second voyage. So firm was his affection towards me, and so great his apprehensions for my safety, that he has often declared, he could sooner have parted with his life than have left me behind, or even had me out of his sight.

Our

Our voyage was long and tedious, as we went to Bengal, Madras, and China. I was three years old when we returned; and had still the same nurse, whose fondness for me, together with the loss of his wife's affection, induced him to make her a partner of his bed and board in the ship. She was amiable and tender; but the severe struggle he had to conquer his wife's former unkindness, brought on an illness, which nearly terminated his existence; during which, her care and attention were unremitted; and friendship and gratitude soon formed itself into love, though of an unlawful nature. But I must plead an excuse for him, since nothing but the wife's implacability could have induced him to form such an idea. When we arrived

in

in England, he proposed leaving the sea for some time, and paid the utmost attention to my education; he instructed me in the first part of my learning, which, though trivial in itself, was extremely pleasing to him. We lived in this manner, my careful nurse still attending me, till I reached my sixth year, during which time, he employed his utmost endeavours to regain his wife's affection, but she was still obdurate; he determined to risque another voyage, therefore it was thought necessary to put me to a boarding-school, and my nurse, and him both parted from me with the deepest concern. I soon made myself very happy in my new situation, and my benefactor I saw no more, till I had reached my tenth year; but a friend of his paid all my necessaries.

He

He was quite charmed with the progress I had made in my learning, and declared his wishes were that I should take to the Church, if my inclination was not averse to it. He staid in England till I was of an age to go to College, and left a suitable sum for my maintenance till I could take orders, when he embarked once more on a perilous voyage to the east; his mind was so unsettled, that he could take no pleasure in his native land; he had lost my dear nurse and his companion on his return the time before, and that I should take orders at a proper time was all the comfort he possessed. Since that time I have had no tidings of my friend and father. Tears for a while interrupted the speech of this amiable young man, when

when he regained his spirits he then proceeded. After I left College, I was at a loss for a maintenance, as my protector had left no more than kept me during my probationary state.

I applied to his friend, who received me with coolness; said he had heard nothing of the Captain, and knew not how he could have been so infatuated as to give me the education he had; but since I had got it, he wished me success, and told me I must make the best use I could of it. Moreover, said he, I will do one thing for you, and as you behave in that, I may, or may not continue my favor. Here is a letter, take it to the Nobleman I will direct you to; he wants a Chaplain; if you please.

please him, you may be preferred; if not, I have done with you.

I thankfully accepted the kind offer, and waited on his Lordship, who received me with smiles, apparently pleased with my person, and desired me to attend the next day to officiate; but guess my surprise when his Lordship led me to an anti-chamber which was filled with painted beauties of the most debauched and depraved kind. On introducing me to them, he told them I was appointed to teach them their duty to him; and turning to me, “And you, Sir, according to their behaviour, are to appoint them their times to fulfill my pleasures: if two are very good I can put up with two each night.”

I was

I was struck speechless with horror, my teeth chattered, and I trembled with indignation at the wretch. He perceived my confusion, and haughtily said, "Sir, I do not mean to prohibit you the use of any of these Ladies whom you can persuade to answer your wishes, and there's none of them very coy, for I am not fond of such kind, I assure you."

At length I recovered my speech, and with a contemptuous and vehement look, I replied, "What, Sir, do you take me for! I came here as Chaplain, and in what kind of manner do you treat the messenger from Heaven, as a Pimp?—No, Sir, I despise you and your detestable house."

Here

(Here they all burst into a horse laugh) his Lordship however continued his discourse, and in a tone of irony asked, "What use think you is a Parson of, but what I expected of you?" "Perhaps I may in time make you a Bishop; you would not be the first, and then you might keep a Pimp yourself." I could scarce contain my resentment, and replied, "He might be ashamed of himself to treat a gentleman, and a minister, in so vile a manner."—"Oh!" said he, "we will soon shew you the way you came: here girls turn this fellow out your own way," with that they set on me like so many furies, except a perfect beauty, in whose countenance melancholy was strongly depicted, and
who

who begged them to let the gentleman out, without using him ill; they then took me to a door which opened into a lane, and while they were pushing me out, the fair one took hold of my coat, crying, "for heaven's sake take me from " this hell of hells, or I perish!" and giving a spring, we were both without the threshold. She cried, "Fly my preserver! fly, or we shall again be entrapped in that infernal mansion!"

Scarcely had we attained the street, ere we heard a dismal shriek from the unhappy wretches we had left, and we bent our course with speed till we should arrive at a place of safety. "Whither," said I, "shall I conduct you?"—"Oh! my God!" said the

the

the unhappy fair, " wherever you will;
" I have no home, no friend, unless
" you prove one."

Imagining it would assist us to elude the vigilance of the monster, we had just escaped from, should he be inclined to pursue us, as well as to afford the fair fugitive time to recover from the distraction of spirits, she had been hurried into by the fortuitous events of the morning; we entered the first house that presented itself as inviting us to partake of that hospitality our money entitled us to, and being shewn into a private room, the fair stranger burst into a flood of tears, which I did not attempt to restrain, concluding the agitation of her mind would be relieved,
and

and she thereby enabled to satisfy that curiosity with which I felt myself already filled. The disorder and violent emotion of her spirits having a little subsided, I enquired tenderly into the cause of her sorrow, encouraging her with the most lively expressions friendship could dictate to reveal to me her situation, declaring in expressive terms my readiness to engage in any measures she should deem most advisable to relieve her from her present distress. She expressed her thanks with the most amiable gratitude, "and though," said she, "you may despise me from the place you found me in, you will, I am certain, give me your pity, at least when you know my unhappy story." I begged her to repeat it, if she thought she

she should be able to support the affecting recital.

“I am,” said she, “the daughter
“of a wealthy merchant in the north
“of England, of the name of Herbert,
“who in the former part of his life had
“been unfortunate, losing most of his
“property, together with his wife and
“an infant son, in a storm at sea; he was
“providentially picked up by a fishing
“smack, and carried safe to shore,
“from whence, after innumerable
“hardships, he reached his native
“place, and soon after, travelling further into the north, he married my
“mother, which in some degree retrieved his fortune.

I was

“ I was the only fruit of this marriage, and am now seventeen. Unhappily for me, the wretch at whose house you found me has a seat near my father’s; a monster cloathed in the insignia of your sacred order, paid his addressees to me. I received them with pleasure, but he artfully persuaded me not to acquaint my father with the circumstance, to which, blinded by love, I consented, till in an unfortunate hour, I was decoyed by him to visit the house of his infernal master, imagining myself the sole object of his affections, as he was of mine.

“ Oh ! Sir, think what were my sensations on being led into an apartment

ment, where my Lord lay reclining on a couch, when presented to him by my infamous seducer, who said, " Here, " my Lord, is the angel I informed " you of; I now deliver her, in all her " blooming charms, to the paradise of " your arms." My Lord quickly approaching, the wretch instantly withdrew, while I fainted into the arms of the despoiler of my youth, my innocence, my fame, and virtue.

" On recovering, I found him very assiduous in his endeavours to revive me; he knelt at my feet, he implored my love, and pleaded his passion in such terms, which I could not have thought any one but a man of honour,

impressed with the sincerity of love, was capable of uttering.

“ In vain I begged to go home to my father ; in vain did my tears plead for me, till the horrid approach of night filled me with the most dreadful apprehensions. A splendid supper was provided in an adjoining room, into which I was forced ; but I saw no domestics, nor any other man, except the villain who was to be my destruction, seated with five or six of those unhappy prostitutes, who, long trained in the ways of infamy, are hardened against the feelings of humanity. They used their utmost persuasion to induce me to eat, but in vain ; and in their dissipated libations, wine was frequently pressed
upon

upon me with like effect. They all assumed the utmost gaiety and cheerfulness, in compliment to me; bestowed the most disgusting flatteries on my beauty, and congratulated his Lordship on his new acquisition. Wine they so frequently endeavoured to force upon me, that I shuddered at the idea of their sollicitation; and, I believe, nothing but the horror with which my mind was inspired preserved my senses, or my life.

“After some time had been consumed in such shameless scenes of riot, these harpies of women forced me into a bed, where by violence they undressed me. But here terminated not their brutality towards me; for even then,

weak and exhausted as I was, without strength to make the least resistance, they brought in the detestable monster; nor could the distress of my situation plead within the bosom of the wretch, to prevent him from accomplishing his purpose.

“ The fright, fatigue, and horror I endured during this interval, threw me into a violent fever; and at midnight, on the night after I had been so barbarously dishonoured, I was put into a post-chaise, along with two of the women I have before mentioned, and brought to this house of infamy, where Heaven, in mercy, has directed you to find, and free me!—Let me now, Sir, conjure you to afford me your protection,

tion, till I can learn my father's disposition towards me; and who, I trust, will joyfully and gratefully repay all the trouble you may have on my account."

"I readily acquiesced, and took her with me to my lodgings, begging of my landlady, who was a good sort of a woman, to see that this young lady might be supplied with every necessary for a few days, and I would satisfy her trouble, and every attendant expence. This she punctually complied with.

"It is now a fortnight since I wrote in her behalf to her father; and though every circumstance was fully explained, have as yet received no answer. In the

mean time, I have been quite in distress for all necessaries, except victuals, for us both, which my landlady provides ; but if her father should fail us, I know not how I shall be enabled to discharge the debts we have already contracted.

“ I have officiated a few mornings at the church where you found me ; but the pittance I receive would scarce pay the expence of a breakfast. Through your generosity yesterday, I have recovered the suit in which you now see me ; and therefore, with the deepest gratitude, accept your offered Chaplaincy ; but, at the same time, intreat your secrecy respecting what I have informed you of, till circumstances shall
make

make a repetition necessary; and hope you will with me commiserate the unhappy fair of whom I have been speaking. I shall, with your permission, devote your intended salary to her use, but beg you will free me from any suspicion unworthy the sacred character I bear: While she remains under my protection, my morsel must be her's, as I am convinced her conduct is irreproachable, and know myself only to be actuated by the purest motives of humanity."

Here he paused, and I replied—
"Think not, my dear friend, for so I shall henceforth call you, that my esteem will be lessened by the ingenuous confidence you have reposed in me;

believe me, it has rivetted my interest with your's : I know not which most to admire or abhor in your relation—your providential preservation, or the implacability of the Captain's wife ; your behaviour, or my Lord's infamy—nor less your generous interposition and humanity in effecting an escape with the unhappy Miss Herbert.

“ You ought not by any means to repine ; since it is plain you were sent by Heaven to rescue innocence from the engulfing vortex of vice and all its concomitants of penury, disease, and wretchedness. I will relieve you from your embarrassment, and become myself the protector of the much-injured lady.—You, nevertheless, shall have
the

the credit, since I would not offend her delicacy by intruding myself into her presence."

He respectfully bowed; and we by this time had reached home to tea.— He continued with us; and you, doubtless, remember the rest of the evening. I desired him to call the next morning at nine, when I presented him with a draft to satisfy his pecuniary demands. He retired with the most expressive looks of gratitude and happiness. You have since beheld his exemplary piety; and, though he may be said to keep this excellent girl, I am confident his mind is fraught with the purest principles of religion, and unaffected virtue and goodness.

I have run my letter to an amazing length, but trust the subject will plead my excuse.

My school fills well; and I have appointed Mr. Williams Governor of it, as it may be the means of keeping the others more attentive and strict to their duty. Another person I have also provided, for the purpose of properly instructing in navigation, and other necessary branches of maritime education, such poor children, whose parents are not averse, and whose inclinations lead them to follow the sea.

Friendly as I am to the true interests of my country, and that grand bulwark, our Navy, which first acquired,
and

and still protects them, I have long lamented that institutions of this nature have not been more generally adopted. I think, my dear friend, were our nobility and wealthy gentry to adopt this mode of having the children of their poor tenants brought up, it would supersede the necessity of the cruel custom of impressing men from their families and home—a violent exertion of power, under the specious pretext of State necessity, that fills my mind with horror and detestation. If the half of my fortune would avail to prevent it, I would freely give it. I should esteem any hints you can give on this subject a favour, as I may hereafter find them serviceable.

Begging my sincere and heart-felt respect for my Lord and Lady, with unfeigned love and friendship to yourself, I am, my dear sister,

Your's in the firmest bond,

T. WARTON.

P. S. I shall continue Williams and Miss Herbert in my next.

LETTER

LETTER XXXIX.

MRS. WARTON

TO

MRS. MITFORD.

DEAR SISTER,

WE have just received a circular letter from the Duke, containing an invitation to celebrate his marriage with the accomplished Miss L—. Oh, what a happiness must we all feel in contributing to the happiness of any one!—and that, in this instance, we may be proud to say we are; for this amiable couple date the commencement of their happiness from the æra in

in which they witnessed the felicity we enjoyed. I have some hope this will also prove a treble wedding, as Townly and Captain —, actuated by similar principles, have made a formal renunciation of their whole train of vices, and declared their intentions of entering the matrimonial list. Heaven grant they may be no less successful than we have been!—and, according to their fortunes, may they imitate our example—so shall their endeavours be rewarded with permanent happiness, and the comforts of social intercourse expel the wanderings of roving fancy and contagious folly.

I beg leave to offer my sincere duty
to those best of people, who are the
fountain

fountain of all this substantial good,
and love to yourself and brother.

I shall defer some pleasing intelligence to our meeting at the Duke's—the whole assemblage that were present on the former occasion are invited—
Once more adieu.

Your's,

SELINA WARTON,

LETTER

LETTER XL.

MR. WARTON.

TO

MR. MITFORD.

IN continuance, as I promised, I now resume my pen. By Mr. Williams's consent; I acquainted Selina with the story of Miss Herbert, who no sooner heard it, but she exclaimed, "Good
"Heavens! what analogy between her
"story and Mrs. Herbert's? But," said she, with her usual sagacity, "should
"it be even so, would it not be cruelty
"in the extreme to acquaint Mrs. Her-
"bert

“bert with it?—That good woman
“acknowledges herself as happy as she
“can possibly be; and should we even
“suffer her to surmise her husband was
“alive, and attached to another, it
“might, perhaps, drive her to di-
“straction.” “What a just argument,
“my love,” said I, embracing her,
“and how happy am I in having ob-
“tained Mr. Williams’s permission to
“acquaint you with it!—Had I, per-
“haps, digested the history as I heard
“it, unawed by thy superior sense and
“discretion, I might have gone and
“informed that valuable friend, and,
“by the rashness of my conduct, been
“productive of those fatal consequences
“you so wisely foresaw, and providen-
“tially prevented.”

While

While we were in this conversation, a servant acquainted me, that Mr. Williams wished to speak with me, if disengaged. I immediately ordered him to be introduced, when he presented me with a letter from Miss Herbert's father, of which I send you an exact copy.

LETTER

LETTER XLI.

TO

THE REV. MR. WILLIAMS.

SIR,

IF a distracted father and a distressed husband can plead an excuse for not answering your letter before, I claim it as a benevolent act; and had you not so lately wrote to me, I might never have been sensible of your goodness.

You informed me of the name of the wretch who dishonoured my daughter; and I instantly sought revenge; but my
rage

rage was baffled on finding the villain was gone abroad. In my frantic distress, I lost your direction, which augmented my distress. In addition to this affliction, I received another wound by the death of my wife; who overcome by the horror of my situation, together with the loss of her only daughter and child, she fell a martyr to a broken heart, and I, by these concurrent circumstances of adverse fortune, an unhappy widower.

I, therefore, my dear Sir, earnestly beg you will again favour me with your address, that I may breath my sorrows on my child's faithful bosom, and console her wounded mind with the knowledge that she has still a father to sympathize

pathize with her sorrow. If you can inform me where to meet the villain who has robbed her of her innocence, I am determined to avenge her wrongs—I madden with the idea, and am utterly incapable of writing more——

I am, dear Sir,

Your's,

J. HERBERT.

LETTER

LETTER XLII.

IN CONTINUATION.

MR WILLIAMS begged my advice on this occasion; which having received, as well as that of my Selina, he immediately penned an answer, and dispatched it by express.—He then, accompanied by Selina, who was now interested in her behalf, went to visit the unhappy fair, and by degrees acquainted her with the death of her mother. She was fixed and motionless, and seemed without the power of venting her grief. After an interval
2 of

of some minutes, recovering her suspended senses, she exclaimed, "Oh, wretch that I am!—yet fear not to tell me—have I yet a father? or, am I also his murderer?"—They assured her she had yet a kind and tender father, who would soon be with her.—"Oh," cried she, "how dare I look my injured parent in the face!—Yet, Heaven knows, in one thing, one thing only was I ever undutiful to him, concealing my affection for that detestable villain, through whose contrivance I am what I am, a destroyer of my much-loved mother."

They, at length, calmed her perturbed mind, and prevailed on her to see her father when he came. Selina
invited

invited her to accompany them home, which she politely refused, on account of the recent news she had received of her mother's death. They then parted, giving strict orders to the landlady closely to observe her.

When we had retired, Selina again intimated her suspicions, that this Mr. Herbert must be the husband of our dear friend; and suggested, as the case now stood, whether it would not be expedient to break the affair to her, by way of preparation; that had Miss Herbert's mother lived, such an expedient would have been improper, but under the present circumstances, it might facilitate the happiness of all parties. The more she considered the
matter,

matter, the more plain she saw it must be so; and for the purpose of satisfying her doubts, paid Miss Herbert an early visit, who received her much better than she expected; and during her stay, which lasted some hours, she was perfectly convinced of the truth of her suspicion. Mrs. Herbert as yet had not been acquainted with any part of Mr. Williams or Miss Herbert's history.—Selina took an opportunity of introducing a conversation respecting her former misfortunes, which when mentioned, always occasioned her pathetically to lament the loss of her husband. In this conversation, Selina said, perhaps he might have been preserved as well as her—Providence is all-sufficient. “Oh, were it but so,” cried she, “what
VOL. II. D “comfort

“comfort would my old age enjoy!—
“even in the idea I seem to feel new
“life.”

Selina then recounted many singular instances of a similar nature, till she was in a state of mind to receive the information, should it be necessary, as was expected. In three days Mr. Herbert arrived; and never was there a more affecting or happy meeting, clouded by the melancholy loss of the wife and mother of these two amiable people. After the mingled effusions of grief and joy had subsided, and Miss Herbert, on her knees, received her father's forgiveness, Mr. Williams was sent for, who received, in all the tenderness of melting tears, the grateful
acknow-

acknowledgments of them both, not only as having been her propitious deliverer from the baneful stew of her vile seducer, but also as having afterwards become the generous friend and protector of her distress.

Mr. Williams had been prepared by us to expect the probability of the connection between Mr. and Mrs. Herbert, he therefore, though he wished to introduce Mr. Herbert to me, judged it unadvisable to bring him to the house, and accordingly sent word he would be glad to speak with me and my wife at Miss Herbert's apartments. We immediately obeyed the summons; and after congratulating Mr. Herbert on the recovery of his daughter, I beg-

ged to speak with him and Mr. Williams. We retired : I enquired of him concerning the loss of his first lady.—
“ Alas ! Sir,” said he, “ she perished,
“ with my infant son, before my face,
“ and I was preserved—to be of all
“ men the most miserable !”—I then informed him I had great reason to believe his lady was still living, who had been preserved in a most miraculous manner, and had no idea of his being saved, also supposing him to have perished before her face.—The poor man stood motionless ; at length, in a faltering voice, he said—“ It cannot be
“ possible, that the idol of my fond affection, my adored, should be still
“ alive, and I have given myself to another !”—“ It may be possible, Sir,”
said

said I, "without any blame being im-
putable to you on that account."—
"Oh, Sir, pardon me, but I could
never forgive myself—Where is she?
that I may pour out my soul before
her."

I found it necessary to soothe his distracted mind, and observed how cautious we ought to be, lest a too sudden interview should prove fatal to a woman of her refined understanding, who had dedicated the succeeding part of her life to his memory.—"I, Sir," said he, "though wedded to another, always held her dear in remembrance—she was often the theme of my dear deceased wife's discourse—and many a tear have I shed to the memory of
D 3 " her

“ her and my poor son. I always wore
“ her picture next my heart ; and now
“ have got miniatures of the two best
“ women that ever blessed the arms of
“ man. I was always fond of a con-
“ jugal life, and detested the idea of a
“ libertine, which was the reason I so
“ soon changed my widowed state.”—

I begged permission to look at Mrs.
Herbert's picture, from which I might
discover if our conjecture was right.—
He immediately complied, and pre-
senting me with the case, said, “ Shew
“ me my first beloved—and I shall be
“ happy if she can forgive an apostate
“ husband.”——I immediately recog-
nized Mrs. Herbert's face, and gave
him joy on the occasion. He fervently
embraced me, and begged me to be
expeditious

expeditious in letting him see his first adorable wife. He now praised the goodness of Heaven, in removing from a scene of distress his late beloved spouse.—“For,” said he, “had she
“still lived, we had all been most
“wretched, without the means of affording each other comfort.” He begged me again to pardon his impatience, but he longed once more to behold and embrace the dearest of women.

We returned to the ladies ; and Selina, in the mean time, had prepared Miss Herbert to expect a mother-in-law. She also expressed satisfaction that her mother was removed, since Mrs. Herbert certainly had an antece-

dent right. We took our leave, and desired them to be ready to attend Mr. Williams when he should call on them, which would be as soon as possible.

When we returned, we desired Mrs. Herbert's company a few moments.— Selina asked her if she remembered the conversation they lately held on the subject of Mr. Herbert. She replied, it was too deeply engraven on her heart ever to be forgotten; but she looked on the idea as too visionary ever to be realized. We assured her it was not, for we had the most positive proof of his being still alive, and that she was as dear to him as ever. This last speech caused an emotion which had nearly deprived her of her faculties; but Selina's

Anna's ready care prevented it, and she expressed an anxious desire to know where she could see him, that she might breathe her last in his arms. We begged her calm attention, while we repeated with caution every circumstance we were in possession of, and assured her we had just left him and his lovely daughter. She entreated us no longer to delay their interview.

Mr. Williams ran to welcome them to our mansion.—But, oh, my dear friend, what pen or words can describe so tender, so unexpected a meeting! They immediately recognized each other, and rushed with rapture to embrace—a dead calm succeeded—and we were forced to separate them, left one

grave should unite their hapless bodies. At length reason resumed her empire; and we retired, leaving them to enjoy their private converse, and also to recover from the violent agitation they must have felt. I assure you we were not dry spectators of this affecting scene.

In about half an hour we rejoined a most happy party. Miss Herbert seemed to rejoice in her father's happiness, and Mr. Williams partook of their felicity. We made them continue with us; and the more we know, the more we esteem each other.

Mr. Herbert has commenced a law-suit against the Lordly villain, and laid
his

his damages at ten thousand pounds, for the injury he has sustained by the dishonour of his daughter. He has received the most perfect assurance from his Council, who are eminent in the profession, that he will recover such damages.

I have omitted Mr. Herbert's personal qualifications, which no doubt you, and more especially Georgiana, will wish to know. He is above the middle size, dark complexion, fine sparkling eyes, and a shape and air quite majestic, about 45 years of age ; intelligent and eloquent ; a voice so agreeable as to make every hearer love him ; am not jealous ; but this is your sister's description of him. I will add Mrs.

D 6

Herbert's,

Herbert's, though you have seen her; but they must no more be parted.— Her stature, when I first knew her, was gracefully genteel, it now rather inclines to corpulency, but only so much as adds dignity to her deportment; her arms are well turned, and her eyes, which were ever beautiful, still retain their lustre; her face and neck rival alabaster, and, I confess, when I first saw her, I loved. I made her proposals; but she rejected them in so reasonable, sensible, and becoming a manner, on the score of perpetual widowhood, that, on promise of becoming my friend, and bringing up my sisters, I would for ever drop all thoughts on that head. This promise I have most religiously kept.

I hope

I hope we shall soon meet at the Duke of C——'s, to celebrate his nuptials, since he and some of his friends have caught the soft contagion from us. Our prayer is, that, like our flame, it may continue to burn.—I mean to give a little Fête on the reunion of Mr. and Mrs. Herbert, but not just yet; for having so recently lost his second wife, it would be indecent to rejoice, though, on the other hand, he has so much reason. Our friend insists on his wearing his mourning weeds the usual time; and, in compliment to him and Miss Herbert, she purposes doing the same. We mean to confine our entertainment to our own family; and I am sure Georgiana will have particular pleasure in being of the party.

Mr.

Mr. and Mrs. Herbert seem particularly attached to Mr. Williams; to whom they all say they are indebted for the peculiar happiness they now enjoy; and Miss Herbert expresses more than friendship to him; but I believe his esteem reaches no further than sincere friendship; perhaps his heart has some prior attachment; or, perhaps, his delicacy may be too refined, after what has happened. Be it as it may, he is a valuable and a worthy young man, and a great acquisition to me.

To-morrow we propose to take the diversion of hunting, and the ladies are to attend in a chaise, as close as they can. I wish my friend could be of the party, as my happiness would be more complete

complete were we never separated ; but since it is for the Public good, we must submit.

Every thing goes on with me in a prosperous manner ; we have received above thirty children into the common school, and seven into the naval one, which I hope will be productive of national advantage—a wish that ought ever to be dear in the mind of every loyal subject.

Mrs. Herbert requests her sincerest love to Georgiana, and to you for her sake. My Selina likewise, and the worthy Dean, who took so active a part in all our concerns ; to his consummate wisdom and abilities we are
much

much indebted. Adieu, my much-loved friend, and present my best respects and grateful esteem to your very worthy Patrons, whom we hope to meet with you at the Duke's next week.

Your's,

T. WARTON.

LETTER

LETTER XLIII.

MISS HUET

TO

MR. WARTON.

SO, my dear friend, public weddings seem now to be getting ground very fast; and, according to your example, Miss L——, Miss Foster, and myself, are to be made public spectacles of. But, however, as you have run the gauntlet before us, I think the best way will be to behave patiently, more especially, as I remember I was rather taunting to Matilda on the occasion of
your's,

your's, and observed, that, had we been in your place, we should have behaved better. But, to be serious, the Duke has sent to Townly and my Captain, and has got the consent of all parties to celebrate their nuptials with his own. Certainly he does us great honour by the request ; and has promised, in return, to spend a month with Townly and us at our respective seats ; so, according to that account, the honeymoon must last at least three months, which is something very novel, I am informed, in the fashionable world.— But should our swains continue in their present mood, I know not when this same moon will change. Pardon my levity, dear Warton ; but Heaven grant our unions, like your's, may be propitious

propitious to our happiness. I rejoice that you are all to be of the party ; and my dear mamma intends, if possible, to be present ; the Captain is exceedingly obliging to her, and she is no less fond of him. We talk in rapture of your felicity, and intend to make your virtues the object of our imitation.

You will be pleased to present my sincerest respects to Mr. Warton, and best thanks to him for coming to England, and setting out in a career which has excited such virtuous emulation in the Great World. I sincerely wish the example may extend its influence, as it must in its effect be not only conducive of individual felicity, but of national prosperity ; as tending to the relief of
distress,

distress, and the encouragement of virtue and industry ; it would rescue the poor from their rude state of ignorance and impiety, and diffuse among them the inestimable blessings of religion.

Adieu, my ever dear friend till we meet, as it probably will be the last epistle from,

Your's sincerely,

K. HUET.

LETTER

LETTER XLIV.

MRS. WARTON

TO

MISS HUET.

RECEIVE my warmest congratulations, my ever dear friend, on your approaching felicity, which I trust will prove as firm and happy in its consequences as that of your friends bids fair for. If our happiness can receive any augmentation, it is from the arrival of my dear Matilda and her Captain, who sincerely rejoices at her friend's union with Lord Townly.—Matilda's felicity beams on her lovely countenance,

countenance, and can only be equalled by the joy and satisfaction which on every occasion actuates her beloved husband; indeed one would be led to imagine, that she had formerly pined in secret, as she is now all sprightliness and vivacity: May such ever be the reward of virtuous constancy—the fruit of the education we received under the auspices of the good Lord and Lady C——. My beloved Warton imitates the bright example of this worthy nobleman in almost every action of his life.

An astonishing occurrence has lately happened respecting the amiable Mrs. Herbert, which I shall reserve till I have the pleasure of a personal interview:

view. It gives me pleasure to learn that your mamma will grace your nuptials; beg my best respects to her, and love to your sister, who will doubtless accompany her mamma.

I beg to be remembered to your gallant Captain, whom I think deserving of the prize he is about to receive. I pardon your levity at present, but when you become a wife I expect you will leave it, and remain with the utmost sincerity,

Miss Huet's friend,

SELINA WARTON.

LETTER

LETTER XLV.

MR. WARTON

TO

MR. MITFORD.

IT was my intention not to have written to you till after the nuptial feast, but the very extraordinary circumstance which has lately occurred, has made me impatient to communicate it to you and my sister. I hinted in my last our design of forming a hunting party, but in the height of our diversion poor Williams was unfortunately thrown from his horse, and had
very

very much bruised one leg; the ladies made room in the carriage, and hastened to Sir George Montague's house, which was nearest; but how shall I describe what ensued?—It requires the pencil of Hogarth, or the pen of Fielding to paint the scene. Mr. Williams was in excessive pain, and we were all busy in getting off his boot; Mrs. Herbert insisted on the privilege of bathing his leg with something she got from Lady Montague for the purpose; Sir George and his son, a youth of about eighteen, had been with us, and we were all in a great parlour; but no sooner had Mrs. Herbert pulled down his stocking, than, with a violent scream, she fell senseless on the floor. Mr. Herbert supposed the sight of the

bruise had occasioned this emotion, and every hand was employed in administering to her without effect; poor Williams was in little better condition, and she was taken into an adjoining room, where only Mr. Herbert and the ladies attended her. We proceeded in our endeavours to ease the pains of Williams; but the pain he now felt was that of his heart, on account of poor Mrs. Herbert. At length a surgeon was brought, who opened a vein, and she began to breathe, but so incoherent was her returning speech, that, though she wished to be understood, it was for a long time impossible; at length she seized on Mr. Herbert with violence, and cried, "Take me to him, 'tis he! 'tis he!"——"Who, my dear, do you wish

with to see? I will conduct you any where. Speak, my dear, where shall I take you?"—"Oh! to him! to him!" was all she could articulate, and she fainted in his arms. We were now still more alarmed, as we could not possibly devise what could occasion it, since the bruise was neither frightful or dangerous. With proper applications at length she began to resume her senses and speech; and Mr. Herbert still holding her in his arms, she exclaimed, "Where is my son, my dear son? let me see him, to embrace him this moment!"—we all began to stare at each other; but Mr. Herbert calmly said, "My dear love, compose yourself, and be more explicit, that we may understand what you mean."—"Oh, his
E 2 leg,"

leg," said she—"don't you remember that particular mark he had on his legs both alike; do, my dear," said she, "be so good as let me look at it again, and I shall be satisfied." She needed to say no more, Mr. Herbert perfectly understood her, and quitting her immediately, like a man wild, flew to the room where he left Williams, who was gone to lay down in an upper room; his distraction made him almost as incoherent as his wife had been, and hastily he desired to be shewn where Williams was; Sir George and me accompanied him. He no sooner saw him, but falling on the bed, he clasped him in a warm embrace—"My son, my dear son!" was all he could utter.

We explained, as well as we were able, to Williams, who now was half dead with fear, this uncommon incident; he immediately pulled down both his stockings, which exhibited a remarkable appearance on both legs, similar to what Mrs. Herbert had expressed. Mr. Herbert, by the help of the Doctor and some cordials, was recovered; and the ladies made their appearance, leading in Mrs. Herbert, who embraced her son with the most maternal marks of affection; and Mr. Herbert and all present mutually embraced. It was now dinner time, and Sir George and his lady insisted on our staying, which we could not well refuse. The lovely Miss Herbert bore no small share on this occasion; but I do not

know that it is an event agreeable to her sentiment ; for, I believe, her affection was of the softer kind—his as a brother. For Selina I was under much apprehension, as such agitations are too much for a delicate frame like her's, more especially in her present situation. I did not intend this intelligence till we met, when I hoped to congratulate you on the same account ; but as it is over, I will not recall it. We were not much in a mind for eating ; but Sir George, with great sagacity and good nature, insisted on there being no questions asked till after dinner, when we would gladly hear them. Accordingly after the cloth was removed, and the servants withdrawn, Mr. Herbert requested Sir George's permission to hear his son's
singular

singular history ; this being granted, Mr. Williams recounted his story with much modesty, and particularly regretted his want of knowledge of his patron, and of the unhappy separation betwixt him and his wife, occasioned by a false jealousy on his account, which during this repetition often brought tears into his eyes.

The story was a sympathetic one, with which none but Selina and myself were acquainted, to whom I had disclosed it but very lately. After Mr. Williams had finished, Sir George begged a hearing ; he said, he still hoped the Captain and his wife were happy ; as he had received a letter from him about a month ago, which contained an ac-

count of his having been taken by pirates, sold for a slave on the Coast of Guinea, and mentioning his uneasiness about this young man he had patronized; desiring Sir George to enquire of his friend concerning him, to whom he had wrote, but received no answer, and was therefore uneasy on the account.— Sir George said, he was sorry to observe, he had found, this false friend whose evasive answers were very unsatisfactory; and what Mr. Williams had related confirmed his suspicions, that the wretch not hearing of the Captain, supposed him dead, and therefore refused to advance the necessary supplies, meanly purposing to convert them to his own emolument. He said he was a friend of both the Captain and his lady,

lady, and it was with grief he heard of their separation; and confessed he was rather inclined to the lady's side of the question. He was happy, however to find the Captain a man of so much honour, rectitude, resolution, and humanity. He would immediately send for Mrs. Williams to be a witness of her own incredulity, and speedily let the Captain know where his adopted son was, with the revolution in his affairs: and doubted not but, through such a mediation as we could form, we should unite in mature age what was impracticable in the bloom of youth. We were compelled by this worthy neighbour and his lady to spend the day and evening, and went home about eleven.

Oh, my friend, what an affecting narrative! and what emotions of joy must those worthy people feel at recovering their lost hope, and being thus by the goodness of Providence preserved for each other?—And, lastly, what a strange accident developed the concealed son?—Had his history been known, Mrs. Herbert might have conjectured the circumstance, and discovery been early made; but it was not to be so; and I am happy in the reflection that Mr. Williams, now Herbert, had not set his affections on his beautiful sister. I wish her's may not be so either, lest it should imbitter the peace of their parents.

Sir

Sir George's son paid more than common attention to Miss Herbert, and seemed visibly affected with the part that related to her being decoyed into a villain's power; which though abhorrent in the extreme, is now the less to be regretted, as from that circumstance flows the source of their present joy; and he who values such intrinsic worth the less for that circumstance is not worthy of her. It is clear beyond a doubt, that Heaven permitted these circumstances to further its own wise ends; to show the instability of human affairs, and to bring about a meeting betwixt those whom adverse fortune had rent asunder. I shall tire you with my tedious comments; but hope for an excuse. I think I shall not trouble you again

'till after the nuptial Jubilee. As I hope for no more tales like those to recount. The young Mr. Herbert, I should have told you, has declared his intention of continuing with me, though his father has offered to buy him a living wherever he can hear of one to his mind; but he will not listen to it. They both wait with anxious impatience to acknowledge their gratitude to the worthy and humane Captain; after which Mr. Herbert, sen. will return to settle his affairs in the North, and then come and settle near us. Thus, I think, in a short time, we shall have a new Colony in this place.

Mrs. Herbert will remain with Miss Herbert and her long lost son, and
seems

seems to show an equal fondness for both. Inclosed is a letter to Georgiana from Mrs. Austin, who, I am happy to find, means to conduct her children to England herself. Mr. and Mrs. Dean, Mrs. Herbert and son, with myself and better half, desire you will accept our sincere love and friendship

Your's in the firmest bonds,

T. WARTON.

LETTER

LETTER XLV.

MRS. DEAN

TO

MRS. AUSTIN.

EVER DEAR SISTER,

WE received your's, and with the greatest joy anticipated our arrival in England, and that of my dear nephew and neice. We should have been happy had it suited Mr. Austin to have accompanied you, but since it did not we must be content. As I was Secretary to you on the occasion of our nuptial ceremony, I must now give you a short account of our visit on a similar

similar happy occasion, to the Duke of ———, whom I mentioned in my last, and who took so agreeable and active part in our rejoicings. The Miss L——, of whom I took notice, is the accomplished fair one to whom his Grace is united;—a more elegant and lovely couple never attended the sacred altar. Mr. Dean had the peculiar honour of joining their hands, as also those of Lord Townly and the gay and sprightly Miss Foster, a particular friend of Mr. Mitford's; likewise Matilda and Captain Wilson, and Miss Huet, the friend of Selina, my brother's amiable spouse. The marriage ceremony was performed in the same manner as ours; and, by desire of the parties, the good Lord and Lady C—— conducted the
first

first day's ceremony, at which none but the most intimate friends were present, us excepted, and such as were of a steady behaviour becoming the solemnity of the day and occasion, as it was on a Sunday.

Monday was ushered in by bells ringing, music playing, shepherds dancing; and every diversion rustic innocence could devise was exhibited on this day. The gentlemen seem to have taken such a relish for conjugal life and domestic felicity from our example, that I know my dear sister will heartily join with us in joy that we have been so useful; we continued three days with this noble and hospitable family, and when we retired, left numbers still to
join

join the festive board; all was gaiety, that is, innocent gaiety and mirth; and every thing which was practised with us, was here resumed; and the Duke told my Lord C—— he intended to become his rival in benevolence, at which his Lordship seemed greatly pleased, and sincerely wished so many might be impelled by the same motives as to form an host of rivals. He dared them all to the conflict, and wished only to live to see humanity and benevolence extend their balmy influence.

I shall say no more on this head; you may conceive the rest; but shall inclose the history of our dear friend and governess, Mrs. Herbert, for your perusal

perusal, which I am persuaded both yourself and husband will be happy to see, the revolution which has taken place is astonishing, but not the less true, as you will see on your arrival.

My brother's school increases daily; and though the expence seems heavy, yet it is not half so much as an uninterested spectator would imagine; for the greater part of the children earn their living, which makes the burden easy. You will please to take all our remembrance to yourself, husband, and children of the happy band, and remain, dear sister, ever your's, in the name of all, as before,

MARIA DEAN.

LETTER

LETTER XLVI.

MR. WARTON

TO

MR. MITFORD.

WELL now my dear friend, I hope we are again quietly seated at home. How long this peace with each other may last, I know not, but must congratulate you on the prospect of the increase of your family, which I understand is nearer than that of my own; but it signifies nothing, you will be entitled to his Grace's honour and bounty the first, unless some of the villagers should

should step in and claim a prior right; however I hope to attend no other Jubilee till that takes place, and I care not if all claim, they shall not go empty away. I shall now conclude Mr. Williams's, alias Herbert's story, and then enter on my own.

The law suit came on last week in the King's Bench, and both the Mr. Herberts and Miss were obliged to attend. His Lordship was cast in the full damage and costs, likewise to remain in the King's Bench Prison till he can find sureties for his good behaviour for seven years, himself in a thousand pound, and two sureties in five hundred each, which it seems he is unable to obtain, as his house, horses, and furniture,

niture, must be sold to make good his damages. He would have escaped imprisonment had he not threatened vengeance on his prosecutors, which made his apprehension necessary. He has led this abandoned and dissolute course of life a number of years, and has run out an immense fortune, but no more of him.

Mr. Montague has declared his passion for Miss Herbert to his father, who approves it, provided he goes on his travels till he is of age, till which time he would have no young man enter on that holy state, as in his opinion he cannot before be a judge of his own passions, much less how to choose a partner for life, congenial with his own feelings

ings and affections, without which the marriage state must be tasteless and insipid, if not miserable. Sir George has opened the affair to Mr. Herbert, who says he will leave his daughter entirely to her own disposal; sensible she will not make an improper choice, and that she shall have his consent whenever she chose to permit her lover to ask it. He has a high opinion of Mr. Montague, but Miss has not declared her final intention. It has certainly been a hard task to drive the lover from her mind; though she pays young Montague great respect, and he undoubtedly adores her, she has given him faint hopes that she will wait his return, but that does not altogether satisfy the fervent lover, they

are

are but seldom apart, and Sir George declares his wish for the union.

Captain Williams set off express, on receiving an account of his adopted son, and a most affecting meeting took place between all the parties. Mrs. Herbert was in perfect raptures; and we thought would have devoured the good man with careffes for the singular preservation of her beloved son; Mr. Herbert was no less grateful; and it was altogether a happy company. Sir George had received an answer from the Captain's lady, full of sorrow for her unbelief, and wishing she knew how to make any possible atonement for her offence, which she feared was now out of her power,

power, since she had heard her unhappy husband was no more; that the rest of her life should be devoted to sorrow and penitence for the misery she had occasioned the best of men to suffer so many years; but she was determined, that the young man who had been the innocent occasion of all, should now share her tenderest regard, and be her sole heir, as the only reparation she could now make. Such were the contents of her letter, for Sir George had not let her know any thing about the Captain being alive. It is impossible to describe the Captain's joy on this occasion; he wished her presence, that he might again be restored to her arms, and embrace her with the same fervent ardor that he received her on their nuptial day,

day, when no passion but the purest love existed betwixt them. He wrote a most pathetic letter, desiring her immediately to hasten his happiness, as he would wish it to be celebrated among his friends; or, if otherwise, he would immediately attend her wherever she thought proper. He sent it by express, and soon as she saw the purport of the letter, without making any difficulty, she set off at a very late hour, and hardly stopped change of horses till she arrived at Sir George's seat, just when the family were retiring to rest. The meeting was joyful, and she on her knees implored his pardon, which was already granted, and retired after a small refreshment to recruit her spirits, almost overcome by the fatigue

of travelling two whole nights and days to the dear object of her former resentment,

We had an early message desiring our company to dinner, and as soon as possible to join the once more happy couple.

We attended early, and the Captain's lady, who is really still a fine woman, received us with tears of joy, and a compunction for past errors recommended her to the pity and compassion even of young Herbert, who with the rest of the company exerted his best endeavours to calm the perturbation of her mind, and by dinner time we had so far succeeded, that she appeared tolerably

lerably composed, and we hope speedily to restore her to perfect tranquility.

After dinner we begged the worthy Captain to recount his late adventures, which he with great complacency complied with. He began by observing, "That when he had sent the youth to college time hung heavy on his hands, and having through the medium of a friend frequently, but in vain, applied to his now undeceived wife, life became burthenfome to him, and he once more determined to plough the ocean, to divert his mind from those objects which perpetually preyed upon it while on shore. He therefore lodged a large sum of money in the hands of him he cherished as a friend, for the purpose

of providing for Mr. Herbert, in case any accident should befall him—during the first part of his absence he received a very indifferent account of things, from this friend, but he now supposed him dead, as he could get no answer from him since his arrival in England.”

Mrs. Williams assured her husband he was not dead, but for some time past had made her believe that the Captain was dead, and rendered her miserable by the most pressing importunities to become his wife, promising a large settlement, but disguising that he had any property of Mr. Williams's in his hands. Indeed he seldom mentioned his name, but with a view to prejudice Mrs. Williams against him; and hence

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proceeded

proceeded her subsequent conduct with regard to her husband, and his adopted son. Nay, this insidious wretch even pretended that he knew the mother of the child, who he said always accompanied the Captain on his sea voyages.

Mrs. Williams now begged the Captain to proceed, and he resumed his history. "After we had been about six weeks at sea, we proceeded for Barbadoes, but were suddenly attacked by a pirate, who boarded us, after a stout resistance, and put us all in irons; they proved to be Algerines, and sailed for that inhospitable coast, where on landing we were permitted to clean ourselves from our filthy condition, previous to our being exposed for sale.—

We were about fifty men, and four women passengers, and were well refreshed to set us off to advantage in the market, where there were plenty of purchasers; my lot was to fall to a merciless planter, at Barbadoes, by whom I was driven naked among his negroes, and my life was nearly exhausted by heat and fatigue, when Providence in its good pleasure softened the heart of my master's wife, who was an English-woman, and she contrived a method to work my deliverance.

“ A neighbouring Planter told my master he had taken a great fancy to me, and wished much to make a purchase of me. My master asked him for what qualification he wanted me? He told

told him he thought I might make a good tutor to his children. Oh, said the brute, if he is fit for that I can employ him some time myself, for I have a large quantity of writing to do, and it will answer my purpose well to keep him. The wretch, however, made me do my daily task, and then, instead of rest employed me in writing, or if not that a severe chastisement; the latter I often received, and was grown so emaciated by the severity of my daily task, and the intense heat of the climate, that I was unable to hold my pen: This continued for about ten months my poor mistress all this while plotting the means of my escape, but in vain. —At length the young planter applied to his avarice, for that was his ruling

F 4

passion,

passion, and by offering him three times my value, I was at last delivered up, and the wretch, though I could hold out but a short time longer, parted with me with all the pleasure imaginable; my worthy deliverer took me home, cloathed me, and nourished me with the tenderness of a son, renovating my battered constitution, his amiable wife being my constant nurse. Till that was accomplished, their lovely children, a son and daughter, shewed and attachment for me, and I was now in daily expectation of being appointed their tutor. I would most willingly have performed this duty as far as my abilities, as I had no attachment but my dopted son, of whom, tho' I got permission

mission to write I could hear no tidings, which greatly distressed me. But gracious Heaven can testify my surprise, when my friend, my deliverer, presented me with my freedom, and told me I was perfectly at liberty to go wherever I thought proper.

“ This event was undoubtedly joyful to me, but not so much so as if I had any dear connections lamenting my absence. My only care was for this young man, said he, because I had left no effort untried to regain her affection.”

Mrs. Williams then again accused his supposed friend as the author of all, declaring, had it not been for him protesting to her in the most solemn man-

ner, that he was acquainted with the child's mother, and her being concealed in the ship; that nothing could ever have induced her to reject his generous offers, though she knew not the half of them. We all joined in condemning this villain, but as Mrs. Williams had his address, she thought it would be prudent to entrap him in a snare to his confusion; her scheme we approved, and she accordingly wrote him, that as he had made her such generous proposals, she thought she could not in honour or decency give her hand without positive proof of her husband's death; if he could bring her that, she should be glad to see him as soon as possible. This had the desired effect, and about ten or twelve hours brought him to the door

ador of Sir George Montague, who politely received him, and desired him to walk into an anti-chamber, while he acquainted Mrs. Williams with his arrival.

Sir George then introduced Mrs. Williams, while her husband was placed in a situation to discover the villainy of this pretended friend. Mr. ——— expressed the most rapturous joy at the sight of the lady, and Sir George made an offer to retire, but she begged he would not. “ I have acquainted you
“ with this gentleman’s proposals,” said she, “ and should be glad of your
“ assistance and advice.” This he readily promised her. “ Mr. ——— has
“ made me generous offers, on con-
F 6 “ dition

“dition of my becoming his wife ; he
“affures me Capt. Williams is dead,
“and as I sent him word of the terms
“on which I would consent, I suppose,
“Sir, you have come prepared with
“them.” “Undoubtedly, Madam ;
“the most unequivocal. Oh, Sir,”
said he, “the Captain was my friend
“but to my knowledge a most wretched
“husband he made ; he cohabited with a
“woman, who constantly went to sea
“with him, and by whom he had a
“son, whom he idolized. To my
“sorrow I speak it, for she was a dis-
“tant relation of mine, and the boy
“turned out a most vile profligate,
“like the son of such a father and mo-
“ther.” Sir George said, “I think
“in charity, Sir, you ought to spare
“the

“ the dead ; perhaps the lady was in
“ fault, and did not return his affection
“ as a good wife ought to do ; she best
“ knows how that might be, but I
“ think a man of that kind undeserv-
“ ing such a wife. Was it you, Sir,”
said Sir George, “ that the Captain
“ appointed trustee to this son.” “ Me,
“ Sir ! believe me, if he had, I would
“ have spurned at it, though my own
“ relation.”—And pray, Sir, do you
“ know if this man’s mother is alive
“ still ?”——“ Oh no, Sir, I held her
“ in such contempt, that I never en-
“ quired after her ; but probably she
“ may be with her son, and it is unlike-
“ ly either of them should come to a
“ good end.”——“ Well,” said Sir
George, “ we’ll drop these unworthy
“ people,

“ people, and proceed to business.—

“ You will be so obliging as to let me

“ see the account of the Captain’s

“ death.” He pulled out a letter from

his pocket, containing news of a battle

in which the Captain was inhumanly

murdered; they appeared satisfied, and

Sir George enquired concerning the

settlements he proposed; which Mr.

—— very copiously enlarged upon, and

produced copies of notes to a large

amount, all of which he offered freely

at the shrine of Hymen, desiring no-

thing so much as, by his tenderness and

affiduity, to recompense the most ami-

able of women for the want of conjugal

felicity in the early part of life. She

thanked him for his zeal; but was afraid

she should never be able to repay those

unbounded

unbounded marks of superior attachment.

He now ventured to lay hold of her hand and pressed it to his lips; he then begged Sir George to use his influence in his favour, who assenting thereto, the worthy Baronet withdrew. Mr. Montague, who, with the Captain, had witnessed the discourse of this specious villain, wished the deception to be carried on till next day; as he hoped they might be enabled either to drive him from the house, or strike a terror to his conscience during the night.— The lady and her innamorato were summoned to supper, which surprised her much, she not being in the secret.— Lady Montague, her son, and the Captain,

tain, were highly diverted with the idea of the young gentleman's project, which was put in execution soon after Mr. M—— was shewn to his bed-chamber.

This gentleman being thoroughly tired with the fatigue of his journey, bestowed little time in reflection, and hastily undressing himself, got into bed, fondly anticipating he should the next night be in possession of what he had so long coveted ; but scarcely had he begun to dose, when a form appeared with a lighted taper in each hand, dressed in long white flowing robes. The spectre was personated by the Captain himself ; who addressed the starting, trembling wretch in the following pointed terms :
“ False and perjured friend, I call on
“ thee

“ thee to answer with thy blood the
“ loss of my dear adopted son, and of
“ his mother also, whom, by thy vile
“ practices thou hast brought to such
“ shameful ends, wretch that thou art ;
“ and now wantest to make my wife
“ add adultery to her other crimes.—
“ Speak, wretch ; and if thou canst
“ justify thyself, I am permitted to
“ hear thee.”

Half dead with fright, his terrors
deprived him of utterance, till the Cap-
tain, in a voice of thunder, command-
ed him to speak, or prepare for instant
death ; an electric shock succeeded,
which had been previously planned ;
this roused him from his reverie, and
on his knees, he entreated the spirit of
his

his departed friend to pronounce his pardon, and he would confess all. The spectre nodding assent, he thus began :

“ I have been guilty of the greatest
“ duplicity to both you, your wife,
“ and supposed son. I confess I have
“ wronged you much on that subject ;
“ since I believe he is not your son,
“ though I took great pains to instill it
“ into your wife that he was, and also
“ that I knew his mother. It is all
“ false, and was only intended to answer my own abominable purposes.
“ I have long loved your wife, and to
“ that unlawful passion have sacrificed
“ my veracity and honour, but never
“ obtained her compliance with my
“ wishes till now that she has given her
“ consent to marry me ; to facilitate
“ which,

“ which, by a forged letter, I imposed
“ your death upon her; and your thus
“ appearing, convinces me of the
“ truth of it, though I knew nothing
“ of it before but from supposition in
“ not hearing of you. Your son I
“ know nothing of, having never re-
“ mitted him the money you left, but
“ was going to settle it on your wife as
“ my own, thinking she had a greater
“ right to it than any one else. This
“ is the truth; therefore pardon me if
“ thou canst, and leave me some hope
“ and time for repentance, and drive
“ not an unhappy man to despair. I
“ will restore your son if I can find
“ him, and inform him of your pro-
“ perty, and make a confession of my
“ crimes to your much-injured wife.”

“ Be

“ Be it so,” said the Captain, “ but
“ at thy peril, see my wife no more.—
“ Send her the property, and leave your
“ confession in writing; but let it be
“ full and explicit, that she may not
“ wonder at your departure; and let
“ the remainder of your days be spent
“ with probity and justice. If you are
“ sincere in your repentance, let the
“ widow and fatherless have your protection, for that will be well-pleasing
“ in the sight of God, and cover a
“ multitude of your sins. Presume not
“ to stay another night under this roof;
“ and if you fulfil not every tittle of
“ your promise, wherever you are,
“ there will I meet you. Farewel.”—
He then made a flourish with his light,
while Mr. Montague gave him another
electric

electric shock, and he lay senseless on the bed. The Captain then gave the lights another flourish, then extinguished them, and disappeared.

Never was a more ludicrous scene, or perfidy more justly punished. As soon as he heard the servants stirring, he rang the bell for pen, ink, and paper, and pleaded indisposition for not attending breakfast; and when the ladies were gone out for an air, the poor wretch sent for a post-chaise, and set off, no one appearing to be surprised, or wishing to hinder him. He left behind him a full and candid confession of all his base duplicity from the beginning, but concealed the cause of his sudden change of sentiments.

I have

I have made a long epistle of this, in hope of entertaining you, and shall send the sequel in my next. My sister Austin is just arrived ; and I strongly suspect it was Austin that behaved so well to our Captain ; but I will not anticipate the pleasure it must give us.— We are all well, and beg to be remembered.

Your's,

R. W.

LETTER

LETTER XLVII.

DUKE OF —

TO

SIR HENRY EVELYN

THANKS, my dear friend, for your obliging attention and assistance at the late joyful celebration of our nuptials. I can assure you, from the little I have yet seen of conjugal happiness, I do not seem to require any time for repentance of the rash act; nor do the rest of the happy trio. We have spent a charming month at Townly's, and are now preparing for Captain

tain ——'s feat to finish our celebrity. Our worthy friends were present at Townly's ball; and I make no doubt, if possible, will meet us here, for a week at least; in that case we shall have nothing to regret, but your absence, which we have all lamented, more especially as it was occasioned by your father's illness; if he is better you must absolutely give us a peep, or we shall think your friendship lessened, though you lent your helping hand to my, I may say our happiness. My wife sends her most respectful compliments to you, as do our friends, with whom we have just parted. I remain

Your's ——

LETTER

LETTER XLVIII.

LADY TOWNLY

TO

MRS. WILSON.

DEAR MATILDA,

I WRITE to acquaint you that we are just returned from the Duke's fête, and ours, according to agreement, commences on Monday next, which we shall esteem as particularly favoured to have graced by your's and the Captain's company during the month, or longer, if possible : hope no excuse will prevent me from enjoying that happiness with

VOL. II.

G

the

the friend of my heart. Present my unfeigned love to all the happy party who are now enlivened by your presence, and persuade, if possible, every one to join the festive band in honour of Hymen and felicity. The invitation, you know, is general, and therefore I need not be particular ; but if they will not, or cannot tarry some part of the time, we must see you all.

I hear Mr. Warton's sister is arrived, and as what passes in your present party can only give her a faint idea of our domestic happiness, I cannot dispense with her presence at the approaching festival. The concert, provided you all perform your parts, must indeed be a treat to her, and I should hope the
ball

ball also would be pleasing ; but I am running to a tedious length, so accept my Townly's respects, and believe me ever

Your's,

TOWNLY.

LETTER XLIX.

MR. MITFORD

TO

MR. WARTON.

I KNOW not how to express my thanks for your very entertaining letters, which awake every sensation of the feeling breast. Lord and Lady C—— have read them with pleasure, and my Georgiana is grateful as myself. In my Lord's name we beg you to bring Mrs. Austin to spend a few days previous to her going to Lord Townly's; indeed my Georgiana is so
eager

eager to see her sister, that I was half inclined she should be the bearer of this. I wonder not at her impatience, since fraternal affection shines so conspicuously amongst you. Before you read this therefore you will probably see her—I beg you will give us the conclusion of the good Captain's history. We all applaud Mr. Montague's scheme, as much preferable to an appeal to the sword. We hope it will have its effect on the wretch who was the occasion of it. I beg my love and sincerest regard to all, and am

Your's

R. MITFORD.

LETTER L.

MR. WARTON
TO
MR. MITFORD.

IN compassion to your forlorn situation, and in compliance with your request, I now proceed with my narrative. I must, however, previously thank you for the opportune manner in which you have favoured us with the company of your wife; it has been gratifying to her wishes as well as to those of Mrs. Austin; the children of the latter lady are two sweet little cherubs,

rubs, who were exceedingly pleased at seeing their aunt. Present our respects to the good Lord and Lady C——, and we will do ourselves the pleasure of waiting on them when Lord Townly's ball is over, which we are pledged to attend, as also at the concert.—I will now resume the sequel of my story.

The Ladies, on their return home, were informed of Mr. ——'s sudden departure, and the sealed paper he had left behind him, was presented to Mrs. Williams, in which he minutely recapitulated the whole of his villainous practices, and adding that his conscience would suffer him no longer to carry on the deception.—May he live and mend.

Sir George desiring our company at dinner, you may be sure we readily obeyed the summons. But before dinner, Mr. Herbert being walking with Mrs. Austin's children, they accidentally met Mr. Williams, whom the children instantly knew, and both at once exclaimed, "Our dear Mr. Williams!"—He stood motionless with surprise, before he had power to embrace them, and when recovered from his astonishment, said, "Good Heavens, Mr. Herbert, from whence have you brought these little angels?"—He replied, "From our common friend, Mr. Warton, who is their mother's brother; they are brought over here for their education under Mr. Dean, whose wife,

"you

“ you know, is another sister.”——
“ My God !” exclaimed he, “ is it
“ possible that so near a relation of his,
“ who saved from ruin my adopted
“ son, should have preserved my ex-
“ istence, to bless the happy day when
“ first I knew a Warton.”

“ Well, my friend,” said Mr. Her-
“ bert, “ if you have cause to rejoice,
“ what have I, who owe to him both
“ the preservation of my long-lost wife,
“ and the recovery of my only son ;
“ at least next to you ; for to you I
“ am indebted beyond measure, for
“ your unexampled humanity, in sa-
“ crificing the peace of domestic quiet
“ and happiness, to afford succour and
“ support to unprotected innocence.”

“ Enough,” said Williams, “ the father of these sweet children rescued me from slavery, freed me from the extreme of misery to enjoy happiness before unknown, again restored to the arms of my wife, as dear to me as when I first led her to the altar, rich in all the charms of youthful innocence and beauty, guarded from the perfidy of man, and now connected by the bonds of amity with those disinterested friends, who only prize their own happiness in proportion as they are conducive to it in others. Where, my dears,” added he, “ is your papa and mama? I long to throw myself at their feet. Are they at Mr. Warton’s now?— Oh,” said Richard, “ if you want to do

“ do that, you must go to Barbadoes,
“ for my papa is there, but my mam-
“ ma is at uncle Warton’s; and I am
“ sure she will be glad to see you, for
“ they very often talked about you
“ when we were at home.”

They then returned to my house ;
and I hope my brother will not suppose
I write these self-encomiums through
vanity, but only to shew the powerful
operations of gratitude in these worthy
men. The Captain came flying in with
a child in each arm, crying out, “ Where
“ is she ? Where is she ? ”—You may
remember, I anticipated this meeting,
and wished to see the first interview,
fortunately I was in the way, and im-
mediately conducted him to my sisters,

who were sitting together. On our entering the room, they got up ; but the poor Captain was almost overcome with joy, and, dropping on his knee, seized with fervor the hand of my sister Austin, and bathed it with tears of joy.— She raised him with tenderness, expressing her happiness at seeing him, and her hopes that he had met with more happiness since his return to his native land than he had done when she first had the pleasure of seeing him. He assured her he had, and that principally through the means of her brother.

After the mutual enquiries and congratulations had taken place, we returned to Sir George's to dinner, where a numerous and happy party were assembled,

sembled, consisting of Mr. and Mrs. Herbert, Mr. and Mrs. Dean, young Herbert and Miss, Captain Williams and wife, your better half and mine, Mrs. Austin and children, Captain Wilson and Matilda, Sir George, his lady, and son. We were all mirth and gaiety, and the last evening's affair was thoroughly canvassed. Mr. Montague received the general thanks for his ingenious contrivance; the electrical apparatus was exhibited, and the manner shewn by which its operations were directed to affect this guilty wretch. His confession was read, and contributed in no small degree to the satisfaction of the Captain and his Lady, who found each other so different from what they had before thought.

Indeed,

Indeed, a most chearful and agreeable day it was altogether ; and we have some reason to think, Mr. Montague's pleasant contrivance did not lessen him in the esteem of Miss Herbert ; he had many warm advocates in his behalf ; but his own personal merit is his best recommendation.

We have almost persuaded Sir George to consent to his son's marrying before he set off on his travels, if he can get the consent of the fair one ; who, if she has any objection to surmount, it is the partiality that still exists in her breast towards her brother ; for she declares no attachment on earth is preferable to Mr. Montague's, whose mind and person she much esteems, though

not with the passionate ardour of a lover, Sir George, however, reminds me of a story I heard before I left England; for he says he would not have the marriage consummated till he returns.

The story I allude to runs something thus.—A contract was entered into by the Noble Parents of a young couple, and the nuptial benediction given; both parties were very young, but remained together in the house while preparations were making for the young gentleman's journey; when, lo! one morning his father, having risen earlier than usual, and wanting his son, who was not stirring, went to his chamber, and found he had not slept there that night, as the bed-cloaths were in perfect order; he
then

then ran to an elderly lady, the mother, aunt, or grandmother, I forget which, to inform her of the affair.—“What,” says the lady, “cannot you suppose where he is?”——“No,” “really,” says his Lordship, “I am frightened, and have no idea.”—She, laughing, said, she would venture a wager she soon found him, and led him to the door of the young lady’s chamber, which having opened, discovered the young married couple fast locked in each other’s arms; in a dead sleep. The old gentleman stood astonished with surprise; and she asked him what he could have expected otherwise?—The consequence was her young Ladyship was sent to travel with her spouse; and, perhaps, the best thing that

that could have happened, as it kept the youth from various dissipations into which he might otherwise have fallen. At the end of four years, the happy travellers returned, with three lovely children, and a fourth very near.

This story I related to Sir George, who laughed very heartily at it; and the young ones were not without a blush on the occasion. We subjoined our wishes, that if Sir George would persist in having his son thus accomplished, Miss Herbert might accompany him as tutor, in character of Mrs. Montague.

We did not part early; and wanted nothing but the company of you and
your

your Noble Patrons to have made the party compleat. The noble Captain, for so I must call him, behaved with the greatest kindness to my sister Austin, who longs in person to greet you brother.

I think I have sufficiently lengthened out Williams's story; therefore shall once more conclude, till after our meeting at Townly's; and am, as all with us ever are,

Your's,

T. WARTON.

LETTER

LETTER LI.

MRS. AUSTIN, IN ENGLAND,

TO

MR. AUSTIN, IN BARBADOES.

I ARRIVED safe with my dear children on England's happy and my own native shore, but amidst the succession of happiness and pleasure which hourly surrounds me, I feel there is something wanting to complete that felicity I cannot enjoy so perfectly as I ought without sharing it with my best beloved, whose presence alone is wanting

ing to render this place a perfect elysium; its inhabitants my dear relations, who have added others equally dear to me, by the uncommon love and kindness they show for me and mine.

I have been present at a fête given by Lord Townly to the Duke of —, mentioned in my sister Dean's letter, and Captain Conway, who was married to Miss Huet, of whom also mention was made at that time, which three charming couple were united at once, Lord Townly to Miss Foster, a friend of Mr. Mitford's family; the Duke of — to a Miss L——, a most accomplished lady; we were present at a concert, exactly similar to the description Maria gave us of theirs, and was
really

really divine. Every one bore a part either with the instrument or voice: The ball was elegant in the extreme, and very numerous, but did not afford me so much real pleasure as the concert, which was carried on in a manner as near as possible to my Lord G—— and my brother's, which these noble gentry imitate in every thing, hoping to obtain and keep pace with them in domestic felicity. I think it would be tedious to repeat it, as Maria gave us so full a description before.

I have not yet mentioned what has much more surprised and delighted me, than all these fine things, the sight of Mr. Williams, who is one of us, and who in the person of my brother's chaplain,

lain, has found that adopted son he used to talk of with so much tenderness; but above all, what will astonish you, that this said Chaplain is son to our ever dear mother, Mrs. Herbert, who has also found her long lost husband, and are all of our happy party.

I beg and entreat my dearest husband, if possible, to settle his affairs in a manner that will leave him at liberty to come to prove the happiness I inform him of. The much loved Herbert, whom I know you esteem as much as we do, what pleasure will it be to you to see that dear woman, who has been so tender, so good to us all, when without a mother; to see her, I say, happy in her much lamented husband and most

most amiable son, both in thought dead, but by the wonderful interposition of Providence preserved, all of them preserved, to render each other happy.

Inclosed I send you a full account of the manner in which these surprising incidents were discovered, as my sister Dean has wrote it down, for she is principal secretary, being fond of her pen. As to Selina, my brother's wife, she is a paragon of perfection, and indeed he was a happy man to reserve himself till he came where such excellence only can be found. Mr. Mitford's elder sister is also a matchless and incomparable woman, and the Captain, to whom she is united, is an amiable and accomplished

plished man. Lord and Lady C— are too great for me to attempt to describe—So much elegance, order, sobriety, benevolence and humanity, marks the whole of their conduct, that they may be truly said to be more than human.

We left these three happy couple to finish their month's mutual agreement, that they should be married at the Duke's, and stop the first month, repair to Lord Townly's at the expiration of that, and stay another, when they should complete the festivity at Captain Conway's by another month.

Heaven grant them all a likeness to that happiness they so fervently imitate

tate and so richly deserve; and that they may never know less than you and your ever loving, faithful, affectionate wife,

AUSTIN.

All our dear friends salute you, and the children, and pray for your coming, among us—Adieu.

LETTER LII.

MR. WARTON

TO

MR. MITFORD.

MY DEAR BROTHER.

I SIT down to relate that new history which in the beginning of our correspondence I thought might have been agreeable to you, little imagining all those pleasing occurrences would have protracted what I now feel quite indifferent to, from the present taste and relish I have of superior bliss ; such as it is, however, you, and no one so much

as you, are welcome to. My father, you know, whose inexperience rendered him an easy prey to designing villainy, soon became what the world calls a bankrupt, but without distressing his creditors; his personal estate was about one thousand per annum, and my mother brought him a neat twenty thousand sterling. Some few years he went on very comfortably, during which time my mother brought me and my three sisters into the world; but imbibing a notion of speculation, and dabbling in the Alley, without being sufficiently versed in the art, soon became a prey to the *black legged* gentry, who not content with stripping him in this way, found means by suffering him to win a little at first at the game of hazard, to engage

H 2

him

him to lay a larger sum, till his imprudence got the better of his reason, and he completely ruined himself, before his eyes were open to the danger he had precipitately plunged himself into. Being naturally of a tender disposition, and a fond father and husband, his mind became a prey to despair, and the thought of having brought to distress a wife he tenderly loved, soon brought on a fever, which terminated his existence, and left a disconsolate widow and four children, to deplore his loss.

My father having no relations that she could apply to for assistance, my dear mother soon became the victim of disordered reason ; she had a brother a rich
Planter

Planter at Barbadoes, who was unmarried, and who commissioned a friend to dispose of us as he thought proper. My unhappy mother was put under the care of the faculty, and after about four years recovered her reason in a tolerable degree. My uncle then sent word that he should be glad if we were all to come and settle with him, which my mother gladly consented to. I was about ten years old, when my father died, and was now near fifteen, when I left school, my sister Austin about twelve, Georgiana ten, and Maria eight; we arrived safely there, and were treated by the good man in the tenderest manner.— Our education was continued as if our father had still lived in his former prosperity. Two years having thus elapsed,

my mother paid the great debt of Nature, from a melancholy which had preyed on her spirits since the time of my father's death. Another year and a half deprived me of my uncle, who had in every respect acted a father's part. I was then near twenty; and as my uncle had early initiated me in business, was perfectly capable of managing every thing belonging to it.— I found myself master of fifty thousand pounds in cash, with every prospect of increasing it.

About this time a cargo of slaves happened to arrive; and, as I had always been accustomed in my uncle's time, went to examine them, lest they should have been basely betrayed, or filled a
station

station too high to be degraded by such unworthy employment, in such case to become their purchaser, and restore them to their friends and wonted liberty. Despising every interested maxim, he thought acts like these were acts of humanity, that made him prosper beyond many of his neighbours, who were governed by other principles. Be it as it might, I was determined to follow his steps in every good work; conscious that it would always bear self-examination. Providence particularly favoured me at this period, by directing me to a place where I found a ship's crew, passengers and all, who had been taken by an Algerine pirate, and carried into their port, which were fortunately purchased by merchants trading in that in-

human traffic, and brought to that place for the plantation work. I surveyed them, and found a beautiful woman among them, a Captain of an English vessel, and an African Chief, all of which in a particular manner claimed my pity. I found their price high, but I purchased them, with several others of less note, who were not for our sultry climate. I brought them home, and gave them their liberty, with choice to remain with me, or go wherever they thought proper; the African proved a Prince who had been seized while on a hunting party; his tribe were powerful, and he rich, and had left behind him a large family. Impressed with gratitude, which his tears bespoke, he then set off for his own native country, where

where he arrived in safety, and soon after sent me a most magnificent present I by no means desired. The Captain tarried with me for some time, with whose company, I was much delighted and edified; but what attached me most to him was, that he had preserved the female I mentioned from perishing in a watery grave; this female was no other than our dear Mrs. Herbert. I was particularly charmed with her appearance, and really felt a something more than bare esteem for her.—She seemed overwhelmed in melancholy; and when I entreated her permission to let me contribute to her future tranquillity, by acquainting her friends with her situation, in a feeling manner, she addressed me as follows :

H 5

Alas,

“ Alas, Sir, I have no friends, no
“ one but Captain Mansel and your-
“ self; he preserved me from the im-
“ petuous ocean, and you from I know
“ not what scenes of distress and mi-
“ sery. My beloved husband and son
“ perished in the storm, in which the
“ generous Captain, at the utmost ha-
“ zard of his life, seeing our distress
“ from his own ship, boldly ventured
“ in a small boat, and happily rescued
“ me from the jaws of impending
“ death. But, oh! what a scene of
“ wretchedness was I reserved for!—
“ What complicated misery and woe!
“ —A widow and childless in one fatal
“ moment!”—Here grief overpowered
her tender frame, and she sunk mo-
tionless on her seat. The Captain and
myself

myself only were at this time with her, but we found the aid of females necessary, and my sisters, by procuring what was necessary, brought this amiable woman to herself. We forbore any more enquiries then; but endeavoured, as much as possible, to alleviate; but she seemed inconsolable. However, I made an effort, as far as was in my power, by offering her myself and fortune, which she most gratefully and modestly rejected, assuring me her affections were so inalienably fixed on her late husband and son, that she was fully and resolutely determined to remain a widow through life; for it would be a violation of her feelings, as abhorrent to her principles, to yield her hand, where she could not also bestow her heart;

H. 6. therefore,

therefore, however flattering the prospect might be, she would never deceive any one in so momentous an affair.—Notwithstanding, she said, if I could employ her in any service of which she was capable, she would esteem it a favour deserving of her lasting gratitude.

I then asked her, as a matter of form, if she was acquainted with any language beside her native one; and, to my infinite surprise, found she was perfect mistress of French, Italian, and German, and was likewise a proficient in music. Judge of my sensations, oh, my friend, at this discovery!—I immediately made her the offer of being Governess to my sisters, with every comfort in my power to procure. She readily

readily assented to my proposal, with only one proviso, which was, that I should never more mention the other subject ; this I faithfully promised, and as religiously observed, which plainly shews the wise interposition of Providence in the most dark and mysterious matters. Had she yielded to my entreaties, what a train of unforeseen evils would have ensued !—Whereas, by her virtuous refusal, and laudable perseverance, how much happiness have we both experienced ?

I was in need of a person thus qualified, to undertake the care of my sisters : They were happy with my choice, and made great progress under her ; and you, my friend, have been a witness

ness of their accomplishments. We lived in the greatest harmony imaginable; till finding my fortune increase so rapidly, that I began to wish myself in my native land, and accordingly concerted the measures most likely to facilitate my purpose; but this business cost me more pains than I expected; for I wanted to part with my effects only to one who would still preserve the custom I had been taught by my uncle to revere.

I waited long in vain, well knowing that planters are too hardened by their barbarous traffic to possess much humanity. I at length made choice of a young man, whom I had purchased in my uncle's time, whose humane disposition.

sition recommended him to my notice. He had some time been my principal assistant; and evinced great partiality for my eldest sister, who at times, I discovered, seemed to regard him with favour. I immediately set about knowing the real inclination of both parties. My sister ingenuously confessed her attachment; for, I am proud to say, all my sisters are of an open and candid disposition. I told her I had no objection to her choice; and that though my intentions were to revisit England, however much I might regret leaving her behind, if it contributed to her happiness, and the young man answered my expectations, she should have my hearty consent.

I then

I then repaired to him, determined he should not know the conversation that had passed between us. I asked him if he had any thoughts of settling, provided he was accommodated with the means; that I thought of returning with my sisters to England; and if I could be of any service to him, I would gladly assist him.—He stood silent, and looked confused; at length he replied, “Oh, Sir, I labour under such an infinitude of obligations to you already, that more I dare not ask.”—I assured him I differed with him much on that head, as it would be pleasing to me to be serviceable to him, as his fidelity and integrity had rendered him worthy any favour I could bestow. He looked at me with astonishment, and bursting
2 into

into tears, said, "I dare not, I cannot
" ask—the only favour on earth I could
" wish or desire—the presumption is
" too great—my tongue will not utter
" it"—I begged him to dissipate his
fears, observing there had never been
any thing so rigid in my behaviour to-
wards him as to justify so timid an ap-
prehension.—He stopped me short—
" Sir, no man ever infringed the laws of
" hospitality as I have done."—I en-
quired in what manner, and gave him
my word of honour as a man to pardon
any breach he could possibly have com-
mitted against me; therefore desired
him to look on me as a friend, ready
to aid and assist him under any diffi-
culty.—I paused to give him time to
consider of his answer.—He then re-
plied,

plied, "Oh, Sir, I know I must be-
" come the victim of your displea-
" sure." I rather rebuked him for
having so little confidence in my word,
and keeping me in unnecessary sus-
pence. He then made an effort to fall
on his knees, which I prevented. Dis-
appointed in this, he cried, "Sir,
" your goodness is too great; but if
" you will permit me the use of pen
" and paper, I will inform you of the
" truth." Readily assenting to his re-
quest, I desired him to retire, that he
might do it with more composure and
recollection.

I own I was pleased with his modesty,
as it indicated an honest heart; but
though I approved of him for a bro-
ther-

ther-in-law, I could not make him a tender of my sister's person. In this dilemma I was undetermined what to do, or what offer to make him when he disclosed his mind. At length his bell rung, and a servant presented the letter, which his timidity would not allow him to do himself. The best idea I can give you of it is a copy, which is as follows :

LETTER

LETTER LIII.

MR. AUSTIN

TO

MR. WARTON.

SIR,

WITH the keenest sense of my demerits, I scarcely dare hope your pardon, when I inform you that, by an unhappy passion, which my nature was incapable of resisting, I have robbed your sister of a heart, of which I am, in every respect, unworthy. Believe me, Sir, was the world in my possession, I would freely sacrifice it at the shrine of my divinity; but, after this declaration,

tion, in obedience to your request, my most sanguine expectations can hardly presume on your forgiveness: I have, however, one favour to beg, which I flatter myself you will grant, that your amiable sister may enjoy your pity and fraternal sympathetic regard, for permitting so unfortunate an ingrate as myself to obtrude on her affections.

In whatever part of the terraqueous globe my doom may be fixed, my prayers shall be offered up to the Lord of the Universe for your welfare; whilst, with the most profound humility, I subscribe myself,

Your most faithful servant,

WILLIAM AUSTIN.

I was

I was astonished at the humility expressed by this young gentleman, and charmed with his exalted notions of gratitude ; yet I was displeased with his appearance of terror on the disclosure of this circumstance, therefore wrote as follows.

LETTER

LETTER LIV.

MR. WARTON

TO

MR. AUSTIN.

SIR,

I MUST need confess myself astonished at the contents of your letter; but see no absolute need of banishing you from my sight; I ought to lay most blame on my sister for not consulting with me on her choice, but I shall take no mean revenge on either; since, heaven be praised, I am taught to forgive

give an injury, as I hope to be forgiven.

We must part, indeed, but not in that angry manner you seem to intimate. First, I wish to give you a little advice; for which purpose I request your attendance in my study two hours hence at farthest, which time I give you to recollect yourself, and hope you'll never give me cause to call you any other than friend, which I still profess myself to be.

T. WARTON.

I immediately wrote a note to a clergyman of the parish, and a particular friend of mine, to favour me with their company

company in an hour or two, and to bring with him a licence and ring, as I thought I should have occasion for his assistance in that time, but which at present required secrecy. I then repaired to my sisters, who, with their amiable tutoresses, were employed in embroidering. I desired them to lay aside their work, as I had something particular to communicate.—“ My “ dears,” said I, “ Mr. Austin and “ myself have had some talk about an “ affair which this letter will best explain. Pray,” said I, after they had perused it, “ has any other lady knowledge of this affair ?”—My sister answered she had mentioned it to no person living. Mrs. Herbert assured me it was the first moment she had heard of

it; but hoped I would consider the youth and inexperience of the parties. Mr. Austin, she said, she had ever considered as a deserving young man, and wished his situation in life had entitled him to the hand of the young lady; but love, like death, levels all distinctions, and makes reason merely the hand-maid of passion. Certain, however, it is, that young people should endeavour to extinguish the first spark, lest its raging violence should increase beyond the controul of prudence or discretion.

I then desired they would prepare to take leave of him, as he would attend presently for that purpose. “And particularly you,” said I, to my now trembling

trembling sister, who faintly articulated,
“ Oh, brother, is the unfortunate youth
“ going ?”—I answered, that I had not
asked him, nor would it be very prudent for her. She briskly replied, “ I
“ would willingly know, for I would
“ gladly wander over the world with
“ him. Unfortunate young man,”
said she, “ to what have I reduced
“ you !—Oh, gracious Heaven ! what
“ will become of him, when banished
“ from me, who am sensible how dear
“ I am to him !—My own misery will
“ be insupportable from a recollection
“ of his sufferings. Yet I cannot, brother,
“ cruel as you are, upbraid you,
“ who have been to me a father, brother,
“ and every thing, but what this
“ dear man might have been, had for-

“tune been propitious to my wishes,
“or I enabled to procure for him only
“the common necessaries of life !”

I own I felt the force of her expressions ; and was happy in the time approaching, when I might convince these faithful lovers I was not so inexorable as they imagined. Poor Austin sent a respectful message, acquainting me that he waited my pleasure. My sister had fainted away, but was now recovered, and seated on a sofa, drowned in tears. I was offended that she had not asked my consent, having ever treated her with brotherly tenderness, from which she might conclude, I would on no account obstruct her happiness. My uncle recommended my sisters to my protection,

protection, but left me sole master of his property ; but notwithstanding this, I ever meant to be a just and faithful steward to them.

Poor Austin now appeared, and seemed much shocked at seeing her in that situation. I desired him to try if he could alleviate her grief, which he readily did, supposing himself the cause, for which he expressed his sorrow, and wished his life could atone for it, as he would tender that a willing sacrifice for her happiness. For that I said there was no occasion ; if they had acted imprudent, they were both young enough to make amends for their fault. I then asked him if he had fixed upon any place to settle in, telling him if he had,

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I should

I should make a point of assisting him. He respectfully answered, and said, he had done his utmost in my service, and I had ten-fold repaid him, for doing no more than what was his duty; and that if me and mine were absent, all places were alike indifferent to him; that his affections were divided among us, and a separation must make him miserable. I told him I had some thoughts of quitting the island in a year or two, and should I want a steward, he might depend on the preference, if he could conquer this unfortunate attachment. He said, he was entirely at my disposal, and would do any thing to serve me; but would rather accept the meanest place in my household to be with me, than all my possessions to stay behind.

I was rather struck at this instance of attachment ; but recollecting myself, said, “ well young man, I wish not so much to make you rich as to make you happy ; therefore I will make one more proposal, which you may accept or not, as you best like. I have observed the mutual affection of you and my sister, and if you consent to manage for me till you can remit me a sum not under two thousand pound per annum, should my sister, after her arrival in England, not attach herself to any one else, and you both remain in the same mind, I will offer no impediment to your union. Mr. Austin shed the tear of gratitude. I told them they should have a quarter of an hour to accept or regret my offer. I then withdrew with Mrs.

Herbert and my other two sisters, and I endeavoured to hear if they had any better opinion of me than they had before this interview. He looked at his watch and said, “oh, my much loved
“angel, what hopes and fears by turns
“affail us—our moments are few——
“oh, direct me what to say, for I will
“be guided by your direction. Your
“brother has made the sum so small
“in proportion to his receipts, that it
“will probably be double the given
“sum the first year. Shall I, my love,
“accept this generous offer, or will
“you doom me to despair?”——He then took her hand and gently pressed it to his breast——“why speakest thou not, my guardian angel, remember our
“time is almost expired, she fell in his
“arms,

“ arms, overwhelmed with grief. “ I
“ cannot,” said she, “ bear one year’s
“ separation——should I consent, my
“ frame would soon decay, and make
“ me the victim of despondency ; ask
“ my brother’s consent ; and if he refuse
“ it, I will go with you to whatever
“ part of the globe you think proper.”

——A tender embrace closed this interesting scene, when we re-entered—
“ Well, Sir,” said I, “ what now is your
determination? Can you wait my
time?”—The task, Sir, is too hard for
this lovely and amiable woman ; she
cannot endure the idea of a separation ;
therefore on our knees we entreat and
emplore your consent to our mutual
wishes.” “ Rise,” said I, “ my brother ;
rise, my dear sister ; if you at first

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had

had asked that one question, it would have prevented you both much pain.— You have my consent, and Heaven grant you happiness equal to your affection. But have you so considered the nature of this solemn engagement, as to preclude the probability of after repentance. “ Oh, brother,” said the dear girl, who was now all vivacity, “ I cannot change, and I am sure Austin never will.—“ I must have the advice of the Reverend Mr. Waring,” said I, “ on this occasion, lest I do “ wrong. Maria desire the good man “ to walk in.” He being introduced, after the usual ceremonies, I acquainted him with the affection of the young couple, and asked him if he thought such early attachments promised long duration?

duration? He replied “ Not always;
“ but hoped in the present instance it
“ would, for he had long admired the
“ worth and excellence of both par-
“ ties; therefore, if his advice was
“ necessary, he should give his affirm-
“ ative in the most unequivocal man-
“ ner, by recommending an instant
“ and irrevocable union.”

“ Say you so, Sir,” said I, “ Then
“ I think myself fully bound to take
“ your advice: What say you, Mr.
“ Austin, are you willing to take this
“ sister of mine immediately, for I am
“ like the Doctor here, a lover of dis-
“ patch? If you love her, take her,
“ and nothing shall be wanting on my
“ part to render you both happy.—

“ What says my filter—are you ready
“ to take Mr. Austin for life ?” “ How
“ many days, brother,” said she, “ will
“ you allow me to make the necessary
“ preparations ?” “ I see,” cried the
Doctor, “ we shall here have the old
“ adage verified, that when one is wil-
“ ling the other declines—But what
“ say you, Mr. Austin, to Mr. War-
“ ton’s question ?

“ Sir,” answered the young man,
“ I am so lost in wonder and gratitude,
“ that the whole appears illusion—
“ I cannot however hesitate to declare,
“ that all my hopes of earthly felicity
“ are centered in that amiable lady,
“ nor will it ever be in my power to
“ repay so much unmerited goodness.”

“ Well,

“ Well, Miss, said the Doctor,
“ Here is a man ready to take you for
“ better for worse, will you, or will
“ you not?—“ When, Doctor? Not
“ so soon as to-morrow. I will not be
“ ashamed to own my love for Mr.
“ Austin; but I see no such immediate
“ hurry as that.”—“ Oh,” said he,
“ Miss, I do not mean to-morrow; do
“ you, Mr. Warton?”—“ To-mor-
“ row! No,” said I, “ the saying is,
“ to-morrow never comes; I mean to-
“ night, with your leave and assist-
“ ance.”—“ I, Sir, am ready instantly
“ to perform my office. Here, Mr.
“ Austin, is a ring, here is a licence,
“ and here is a prayer-book.” Mr.
Austin bowed, and Miss, to be sure,
gave a great scream and a blush. But
the

the Doctor said, "We will give you
" half an hour more to prepare your-
" self. Mr. Warton gives you away,
" your sisters are bride's maids, and
" we shall make a happy party at sup-
" per." She again blushed, and the
Doctor and I retired to take a glass;
while the young folks were all in a
bustle. The half hour being expired,
we returned to the library; the dear
girl had been weeping, but I suppose
they were tears of joy she shed. With
a little modest reluctance I gave her
hand; her heart she had before disposed
of to the best of men. When the ce-
remony was over, I embraced her with
rapture, and sincerely congratulated her
on the choice she had made. Happy
Austin could not disguise the exultations
of

of his mind. We spent the evening in a most agreeable manner ; I postponed my intentions with respect to them for the present ; and the rising Sun next day welcomed the bridegroom to his usual avocations.

At breakfast we met the lovely bride, heightened with every graceful charm. We congratulated the happy pair on their union, and there was a general day of rest among our slaves and domestics. Mrs. Herbert contributed no small share to our mirth ; for she loved my sister as her own child, and esteemed Austin for his exemplary conduct and irreproachable integrity. I informed him of my intention to return to England when he was settled. The conditions,

tions, that he should remit me one half of the produce of the plantation during my life, the other half he should receive as a dowry with my sister; but if on my demise, I left a son, the same sum should be continued to him; if only daughters, they should receive one thousand pounds each, to the number of ten, or that sum to be divided among as many or few as should survive me, but that there should be no other incumbrances than as before-mentioned. To these stipulations he cheerfully agreed, only observing it was too much to trust so young a man with, as it would soon enable him to become as rich as myself. I told him I wished no other; strictly, however, enjoining him to keep up my uncle's custom of restoring

storing unfortunate captives to their liberty, when they appeared deserving of the blessing; that I should remain on the island till I was satisfied of the manner in which he meant to conduct himself in this particular—I staid, and, thank Heaven, found his actions were regulated by the purest principles of humanity and universal benevolence.

Ten months, to our great joy, presented me with a nephew; and another twelve-month brought me forth a niece. After seeing my sister's health perfectly re-established, I began seriously to think of returning to England; I accordingly made various remittances of my immense treasure; and about three years after my sister's nuptials, left Barbadoes. The sequel you well know.

I have omitted many striking passages in my history, which your alliance with Georgiana renders unnecessary, she being minutely acquainted with every circumstance attending our affairs. What I have written will therefore, I hope suffice. I expect you will soon see Mr. Austin in England; his wife being near her time, we are all anxious for his being present at her lying-in.— Selina begins to complain; and I think we bid fair to have as many christenings as we had weddings. Two of the village couples have got the start of us, and there is no doubt but the Duke of —— will be as good as his word, in standing sponsor for the first child, as also Lord —— to the other. I am happy to see so laudable an alteration
in

in these noble personages, though they do us the honour of attributing both change and happiness to us.

The perfidious Mr. — sent the various sums he had purloined to Mrs. Williams ; and what I am sorry to hear, though punishment ever awaits such complicated crimes, the wretch, stung with remorse, on hearing Captain Williams was alive, put an end to his existence !—Horrid effect of insatiable avarice and treachery !

Sir George Montague has given his consent to his son's marriage, who, at length, by unwaried attention, has awoke that tenderness in Miss Herbert's heart, she had so unhappily, though innocently, placed

placed on another. Sir George has left it to his own option to travel or not, as he thinks proper. The nuptials are to be celebrated in a fortnight's time—Young Mr. Herbert to join their hands, who still continues to perform his sacred functions with me.

Lord —— the wretch to whom Mrs. Herbert owes her unhappiness, as I informed you not being able to find bail, flew to liquor to drown reflection, and became a prey to excess, without one tear of pity for his loss, excepting only as he was unprepared to meet the Majesty of Heaven. Captain Wilson and Matilda stays with us another month, and will then repair to you; they seem to improve each other; the Captain is
an

an ornament to his profession; he is in a new raised regiment and supports the dignity of Colonel without the austerity of a disciplinarian; he is strict but mild; his orders are peremptory, but not severe; he is, in short, what every soldier ought to be, and tempers justice with mercy; a man of honour and a real Christian, like his great predecessor by his mother's side, the immortal Colonel Gardiner.

My schools, Heaven be praised, increase and flourish; and Sir George Montague, and with many of our rich neighbours are become voluntary Subscribers, and with each child they present, they give the annual sum of ten pounds, which enables us to take
more

more children than our own manor afforded. I have not a doubt but it will soon become an object of national utility, as I have already a ship in forwardness for the boys to be instructed in the practical part of seamanship—I therefore flatter myself, that in the course of eight or ten years, I shall, with the assistance of my neighbours, who have offered a large subscription for the purpose, to be enabled to build, and completely man, from our infant seminary, a ship of war that may do honour to his Majesty's service. We have a number of tractable and promising young lads, who have been picked up as poor vagrants, having no proper employment, of the age of sixteen or seventeen, who with the instructions

tions they will receive, may become an ornament instead of a disgrace to their country.

Captain Williams, and both the Mr. Herberts, assist me in all my projects, and as there seems a sincere and firm attachment among the ladies, there is no fear of any wishing to separate. Mr. Herbert is building a house very near me, but we shall find a difficulty to part with them at all. The Captain has taken one within a mile, which he is fitting up, but at present is with his wife at Sir George's. We seldom miss a day without being all of a party, and it is my peculiar happiness to say, I have found more substantial and true happiness, since my arrival in England, than
I thought

I thought this world capable of giving ; but am convinced that the Great Disposer of all gives a blessing in a superior degree, both of outward and inward satisfaction, where the talent given is appropriated to humane purposes ; and what greater pleasure is there than in making those under us partake the comforts and enjoyments of life.

To those noble and worthy personages, Lord and Lady C—— how much does the world stand indebted ? Their example has set a lesson to the Nobility and Gentry around them, who are not only mended in their own morals but become promoters of virtue, learning, and universal charity.

Oh, happy were it for England did these noble examples extend their influence throughout the Great World, vice and immorality would no more blot the historic page, and religion and virtue would facilitate our pursuits after happiness. How pleasing must be the death-bed reflection, to think that we have been good and faithful stewards of our possessions?—That instead of dissipating our fortunes in folly and extravagance, we have made them subservient to the purposes of charity and brotherly love?—This reflection will alone soften the bed of pain, and lessen the terrors of death.—Contrast this with the situation of the dying wretch, who, tortured with the consciousness of a mis-spent life, wishes to recall the pre-

cious moments he has lost, that by repentance he may appease the anger of an offended God—who, trembling on the threshold of eternity, dreads the moment that must sink him down its awful precipice.—No less true is it that virtue is its own reward, than that vice bears its own punishment.

I have been led into these reflections by a retrospect of the fate of the infamous Lord —, and that of the no less dishonourable Mr. —. While around this fruitful and happy spot, we see nothing but an emulation of virtue among the Gentry—who are husbands to the widows, and fathers to the fatherless—rearing the infant poor by incitements to industry, and discouraging vice

vice and incontinence, by promoting matrimony, and raising a numerous posterity to bless those through whose benevolence they have been made useful or valuable members of society.— Pardon me, if I have said any thing contrary to your opinion, or my Lord C——'s; to him I beg leave to offer my grateful acknowledgments, for having taught me, by his example, my duty towards God and man. To the Rev. Mr. Spicer I also return my sincere thanks for every instance of his favour and affection to me and mine, and to all who have been instrumental to the public good.

All our friends and connections join in love with me to you and Georgiana

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Mr.

Mr. Dean is exemplary as a man and a minister in his parish; he is made almost an idol among his flock; his humility and humanity go hand in hand; to the sick he is a physician; to the healthy a wise counsellor; and to the wicked a mild scourge, drawing by the force of love those over whom reason has no influence. To the good, of whatever rank, he is not only an engaging but an edifying companion.

Maria's first letter, after her arrival in England, gave me an impression favourable to his character and her own judgment. I am happy to add, she is to him such a wife as he deserves.—

We may rank ourselves among the peculiar favourites of Heaven, to have been so blessed in our several partners.

I now

I now expect some particular business, which may for some time suspend our literary communications. You partly know the cause. Our next public meeting, I suppose will be to fulfil our agreement entered into at my Lord C—'s, relative to baptisms; till when, may bliss, without alloy, be the portion of you and your's. This is the fervent wish of

Your sincere friend,

T. WARTON.

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